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A*D - TENSHI NO USO

by Aki

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Angel's Doubt v2 c11

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Scanner: Fathom
Translator: fishbrains2.0
Proofreader: Lyn
Cleaner: daiwozou
Redrawer p2-3: Fathom
Typesetter: Cpt. Mischief
QC: Fathom

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SINCE TIME IMMEMO-RIAL
AMAZING STONES HAVE HAD AMAZING POWERS.
AND SOMEHOW, JUST BY HOLDING THEM, AMAZING THINGS SEEM TO HAPPEN
.....
That is what Rikuto-kun said.
THAT'S AMAZING...
I WONDER WHAT IT COULD BE! AMAZING, RIGHT?
HE'S SPARKLING
FORCE?
YUP!
WHO SAID THAT?

天使の嘘
ANGEL'S DOUBT
It's true.
Even I can understand the existence of such a thing, but...
...
I WONDER WHAT THOSE AMAZING THINGS COULD BE
INCRE-DIBLE THINGS!!
WHAT SORT OF THINGS?
ALL SORTS OF THINGS!!
AHA HA
YOU'RE RIGHT.
YEAH!
All sorts of things
Yup, all sorts of things!
...

POUR
POUR
POUR
THE AMAZING POWERS OF AMAZING STONES MAKE AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN
...IS THAT RIGHT?
EVEN AFTER HEARING IT EXPLAINED, I CAN'T MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF IT. I'M COMPLETELY LOST.
AHAHA
THAT'S UNDER-STAND-ABLE.
DO YOU COMPREHEND IT ALL, EIRI-SAMA?
HMMM.
IT SEEMS I DO UNDER-STAND.
OR IT SEEMS THAT I'VE BEEN DIVERTED.

OH.
DELI-
CIOUS.
Yes!
...IF EIRI-SAMA WAS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND IT ALL, THEN THAT'S GOOD...
George Galancia
wanted that stone to have the reputation of "an exceptional sapphire."
AMAZING STONES COME WITH AMAZING POWERS, IS IT...?
All sorts of "amazing."
TRULY.

Even if there is "amazingly good" and "amazingly bad"
"amazing" in and of itself is neither good nor bad.
ALTHOUGH IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO TURN OUT TO BE A PLAY ON WORDS.
NOW, IF YOU WERE TO BRING UP "THE AMAZING STONE" HERE,
MOST LIKELY, THEY WOULD THINK OF THE STONE KEPT BENEATH THIS MANSION.
YET IF YOU WERE TO MAKE THAT ASSUMPTION AND CONTINUE WITH THE CONVERSATION,
AT SOME POINT, IT WOULD BECOME A PLAY ON WORDS
WOULD IT HAVE "BECOME"
OR WOULD IT HAVE "BEEN TURNED INTO," I WONDER.
On top of that whether this is done unconsciously or deliberately is entirely beyond my grasp.
...HOW INTER-ESTING
EH?
RIKUTO-KUN.
YES?

Some-
times
that child
will even
have me
thinking,
"Does
he actually
understand
everything?"
HOW SHOULD I PUT IT?
HE'S A CURIOUS CHILD, ISN'T HE?
QUITE.
SOMETIMES I ASK MYSELF IF HE UNDERSTANDS WHAT HE'S SAYING.
PERHAPS..
ON TOP OF THAT,
HE REALLY DOES KNOW IT ALL, EVEN INCLUDING ALL THAT I WISH TO KNOW.
COULD HE BE
TELLING ME...
TO FIND THE ANSWER MYSELF..?

HE IS RATHER UNYIELDING.
PERHAPS HE DID KNOW,
BUT I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED...
IF HE HAD JUST KEPT QUIET AND WENT ALONG WITH IT BEING A SAPPHIRE..
THANKS TO HIM, IT'S BECOME REALLY TROUBLESOME.
WELL, THAT CAN'T BE HELPED.
ANYHOW, I ALSO THOUGHT IT WAS DIFFERENT.
I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE JUST WRITTEN UP THE PAPERS AS GEORGE WANTED, EITHER.
WHETHER RIKUTO-KUN BROUGHT IT UP OR NOT,
IT PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TURNED OUT TO BE TROUBLESOME EITHER WAY, SO IT'S FINE.
Right?
Is that so?
...

HOWEVER, WE CAN'T LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE.
IF POSSIBLE, I THINK WE SHOULD
HAVE OUR OWN PERSONAL APPRAISER SETTLE THIS MATTER.
YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT.
BUT WE CAN'T JUST TAKE THE STONE AWAY..
SHOULD WE HAVE OUR APPRAISER COME HERE THEN?
ALTHOUGH IF GEORGE WERE TO BE TOLD TO HIS FACE THAT IT'S NOT A SAPPHIRE,
IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HE WOULD BECOME VIOLENT THAT WOULD BE FRIGHTENING
Please refrain from such actions...
BORROWING THAT STONE
AND TAKING IT TO THE CAPITAL TO GET PROPERLY APPRAISED WOULD BE MOST IDEAL
HMM...

BANG!
WHAT TO DO?
HEY.
YOU THERE?
WH...
WHAT IS THIS, ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
SHRUG
AH, I FORGOT.
ISN'T IT RUDE TO NOT EVEN KNOCK?!
GAPE
GAPE
.....
.....
.....
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
AND SO SUDDENLY.
Whether it's using your foot or your tone in addition to all kinds of

WHAT HAPPENED TO SEND YOU HERE, ALL BY YOURSELF, TO MY QUARTERS?
...
IT'S NOT LIKE I CAME HERE 'CAUSE I WANTED TO.
ZIZ AND RIKU WERE BUGGING ME TO COME.
My
SO ZIZKUN HAS SAFELY RETURNED?
ISN'T THAT NICE?
THERE'S NOTHING PARTICULARLY NICE ABOUT THAT
ESPECIALLY SINCE HE DIDN'T EVEN BRING ANY SOUVENIRS.
HE'D COME BACK EVEN IF YOU ABANDONED HIM.
hmph
HE CERTAINLY ISN'T VERY STRAIGHT-FORWARD.
AND?
WHAT DID YOU NEED OF ME?
What're you smiling at?
Damn you

I'D BE DELIGHTED IF YOU WANTED TO GIVE ME A SOUVENIR
DIDN'T I JUST SAY THERE WEREN'T ANY SOUVENIRS?
WHAT? THAT'S DISAPPOINTING.
-AH.
..THAT'S RIGHT.
IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT GIFTS, IN A SENSE, HE DID BRING A GIFT.
HUH?
WHAT IS IT?
DOCUMENTS.
DOCUMENTS?
CERTIFICATION.
FOR THAT STONE.

WERE YOU ABLE TO HAVE THAT STONE APPRAISED?!
HUH?
HOW WERE YOU...?
IDIOT. YOU'RE TOO LOUD GLASSES.
GLANCE
GLANCE
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY MEAN TO SAY THAT YOU USED SOME DISREPUTABLE MEANS WHICH YOU CAN'T EVEN ALLOW OTHERS TO KNOW OF...
LOUD ...
IT'S FINE, IT WASN'T ANYTHING THAT BAD.
THIEF!!!
THERE WON'T BE ANY PROBLEMS AS LONG AS IT'S RETURNED BEFORE ANYONE NOTICES.
SHUT UP GLASSES.
EIRI-SAMA, THIS MAN IS A CRIMINAL! YOU MUST NOT SPEAK TO HIM!
BUT REALLY, HOW DID YOU DO IT?

Most likely...
YOU'LL GET IT IF YOU COME TO MY ROOM.
Aren't you curious?
Eir-sama, let's not. He is a criminal!
FROM WHAT HE'S IMPLYING
THEY PROBABLY STOLE THE REAL THING AT THAT VERY MOMENT
Ziz-kun then brought it to the capital
showed it to an appraiser employed by Caluanthes and then came back
If they did something it must have been the day before
when they said that they wanted to see the stone
Meaning...
AH!

THE STONE WAS MOST CERTAINLY STILL ON THE PEDESTAL.
WHEN I LEFT THE ROOM
I SEE...
In other words
that was an exact replica of the real thing.
IN THAT CASE...
IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANYTHING DIFFICULT.
For Rikuto-kun, that is.
As long as he had a few days

thud
thud
thud
thud
easily.
he definitely would have been able to make one or two of those
KM
ROLL
WHAT IS THIS??
WH-
THI-
Woooow
hmmm
THAT WAS NAIVE OF ME.
BU-
BUT-!!
Not like that's possible
IS YOUR HEAD ALL RIGHT, GLASSES?
YOU COULDN'T HAVE STOLEN THIS MANY...

THE...THERE ARE SO MANY STONES...!!
YOU'RE MISTAKEN, YONEDA.
THESE AREN'T STONES.
EH?
BUT. HOWEVER YOU LOOK AT THEM...
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IF YOU LICK THEM.
THESE ARE ALL CANDY.
THESE ARE FAKES MADE OF SUGAR!
WHAT...
BY THE WAY,
HERE'S THE REAL ONE.

I CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE AT ALL...
BY LOOKING AT THEM.
IF YOU HOLD THEM BOTH, YOU CAN TELL THERE IS A WEIGHT DIFFERENCE.
SINCE THERE WASN'T A CHANCE TO HOLD IT THIS TIME,
THERE WAS NO WAY TO CONFIRM ITS WEIGHT.
HERE.
DON'T MIX IT UP WITH THAT PILE OVER THERE.
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PICK IT OUT.

In short
YOU SWAPPED THEM, DIDN'T YOU?
AT THE TIME WHEN EVERYONE WAS CLAMORING ABOUT BECAUSE OF RIKUTO-KUN KNOCKING INTO THE ARMOR?
PRETTY MUCH.
TH... THIEF...
SHUT IT. GLASSES.
SO THE PROBLEMATIC APPRAISAL RESULTS
WELL, IT'S PRETTY MUCH AS SUSPECTED
IT'S NOT A BAD STONE.
MEANING?

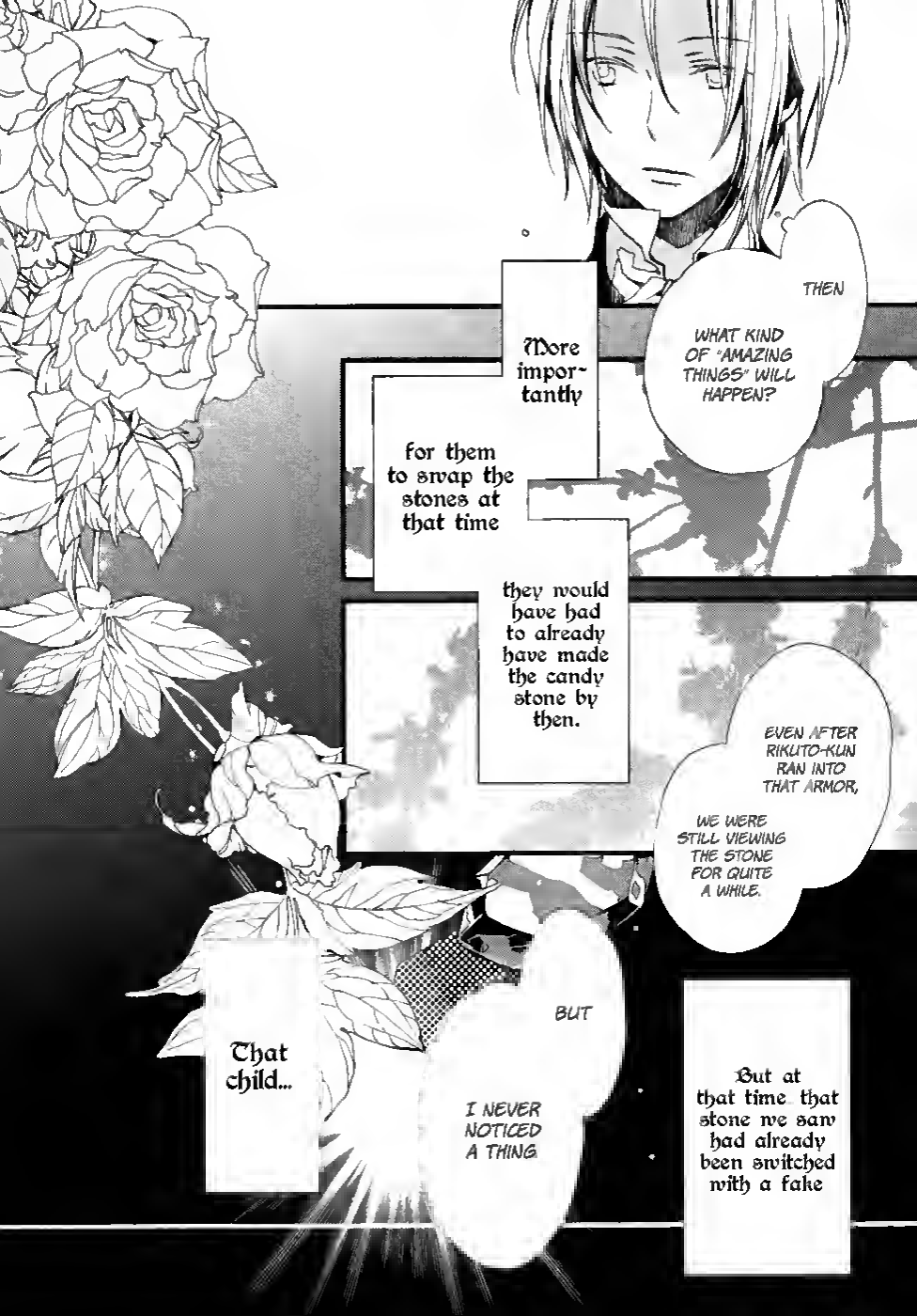
...
IT'S THE COMMON "OCCASIONAL STONE."
??
BASED ON YOUR WORDS, IT SOUNDS LIKE A CONTRADICTION, BUT...
I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY.
Probably
IT'S THAT, RIGHT?
SOMETHING LIKE A SPINEL.
A SPINEL?
...?
WHAT IS THAT?
That
IN SHORT
THOUGH IT MAY LOOK EXACTLY LIKE A SAPPHIRE TO THE NAKED EYE,
IF YOU WERE TO EXAMINE IT CLOSELY, ITS COMPOSITION AND CERTAIN FINE POINTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM A SAPPHIRE.

A FAMOUS EXAMPLE WOULD BE THE SPINEL THAT LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE A RUBY.
HEH...
THEN, IS THIS THE SAME AS A SPINEL?
Though it looks the same, its composition differs.
HMM
I WONDER ABOUT THAT..
ahaha
JUST TELL HIM NO.
What kind of kindness is that?
CRUNCH
CRUNCH

IF THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HOW IT LOOKS, ISN'T IT FINE?
BUT IT'S NOT A TRUE SAPPHIRE..
"THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ITS APPEARANCE,"
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S LIKE THIS?
BUT IT LOOKS EXACTLY THE SAME..
HM? IF THE CERTIFICATE SAYS IT'S SOMETHING ELSE, THEN IT'S NOT THE REAL THING AFTER ALL.
EVEN IF THEY LOOK THE SAME,
WOULDN'T IT BE BAD IF IT WERE CANDY?
WOULDN'T THE CANDY MELT?!
A HA HA
BUT THE OTHER PART OF ME THINKS THAT IF IT LOOKS THE SAME, AND THE COMPOSITION'S JUST SLIGHTLY OFF..
UGH
ANYWAY ONE PART OF ME THINKS THAT THE REAL THING IS BEST
And the two parts are fighting in my head!!

THEN IF YOU COMPARED THE CANDY THAT YOU CAN'T TELL APART FROM THE REAL THING,
WITH A STONE THAT LOOKS INFERIOR BUT IS OF EXACTLY THE SAME COMPOSITION
URK.
WELL, IN THIS CASE
IT'S NOT SOMETHING OBVIOUSLY DIFFERENT, LIKE A PIECE OF CANDY
SO IT'S BECOME UNNECESSARILY TROUBLE-SOME
EXACTLY.
IT'S NOT A BAD STONE.
YOU COULD EVEN SAY THAT ITS QUALITY IS BETTER THAN THAT OF THE MODERATELY PRICED SAPPHIRES AROUND HERE.

WHY DOES HE INSTANTLY VEER TOWARDS BAD DEEDS?
IT CAN'T BE SOLD THROUGH DECEPTION, EITHER.
Tsk, too bad.
STRICTLY SPEAKING, IF YOU APPRAISED IT, YOU'D IMMEDIATELY FIND OUT IT'S SOMETHING ELSE.
BUT IT PROBABLY ISN'T WORTH AS MUCH AS THAT LITTLE BROTHER WOULD HOPE A SAPPHIRE LIKE THIS WOULD BE WORTH.
IS THAT IT?
IT'S STILL AN "AMAZING STONE."
ALTHOUGH THE STONE HAS NO REPUTATION,
IT'S A STONE WITH POWER.
GOOD OR BAD, THIS THING'S GOTTEN ALL OF US INVOLVED.
YEAH, THAT'S ABOUT IT.


THEN
WHAT KIND OF "AMAZING THINGS" WILL HAPPEN?
More importantly
for them to swap the stones at that time
they would have had to already have made the candy stone by then.
EVEN AFTER RIKUTO-KUN RAN INTO THAT ARMOR,
WE WERE STILL VIEWING THE STONE FOR QUITE A WHILE.
But at that time that stone we saw had already been switched with a fake
BUT
I NEVER NOTICED A THING
That child...

He...
For him to observe the stone before having to make the candied copies...
...only had that one chance.
...ONLY BY RELYING ON HIS MEMORY?
WAS HE REALLY ABLE TO MAKE SUCH AN ELABORATE COPY...

...BUT
IT'S TRULY BEAUTIFUL.
This is a piece of candy.
IF I WERE TO SAY THE REPLICA EXCEEDED THE ORIGINAL IN BEAUTY,
...WOULD MY JUDGEMENT BE INCORRECT?

Afterword

THIS IS THE SECOND VOLUME OF A"D.

IT'S THE FIRST TANKOBON IN A WHILE. THANK YOU SO MUCH TO THOSE WHO HAVE WAITED FOR THIS.

HERE ARE STILL CHARACTERS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN INTRODUCED YET, SO I'D REALLY LIKE TO HURRY AND ADVANCE THE STORY TO WHERE THEY APPEAR.

THAT'S WHAT I'M ALWAYS THINKING. IT'S THE TRUTH.

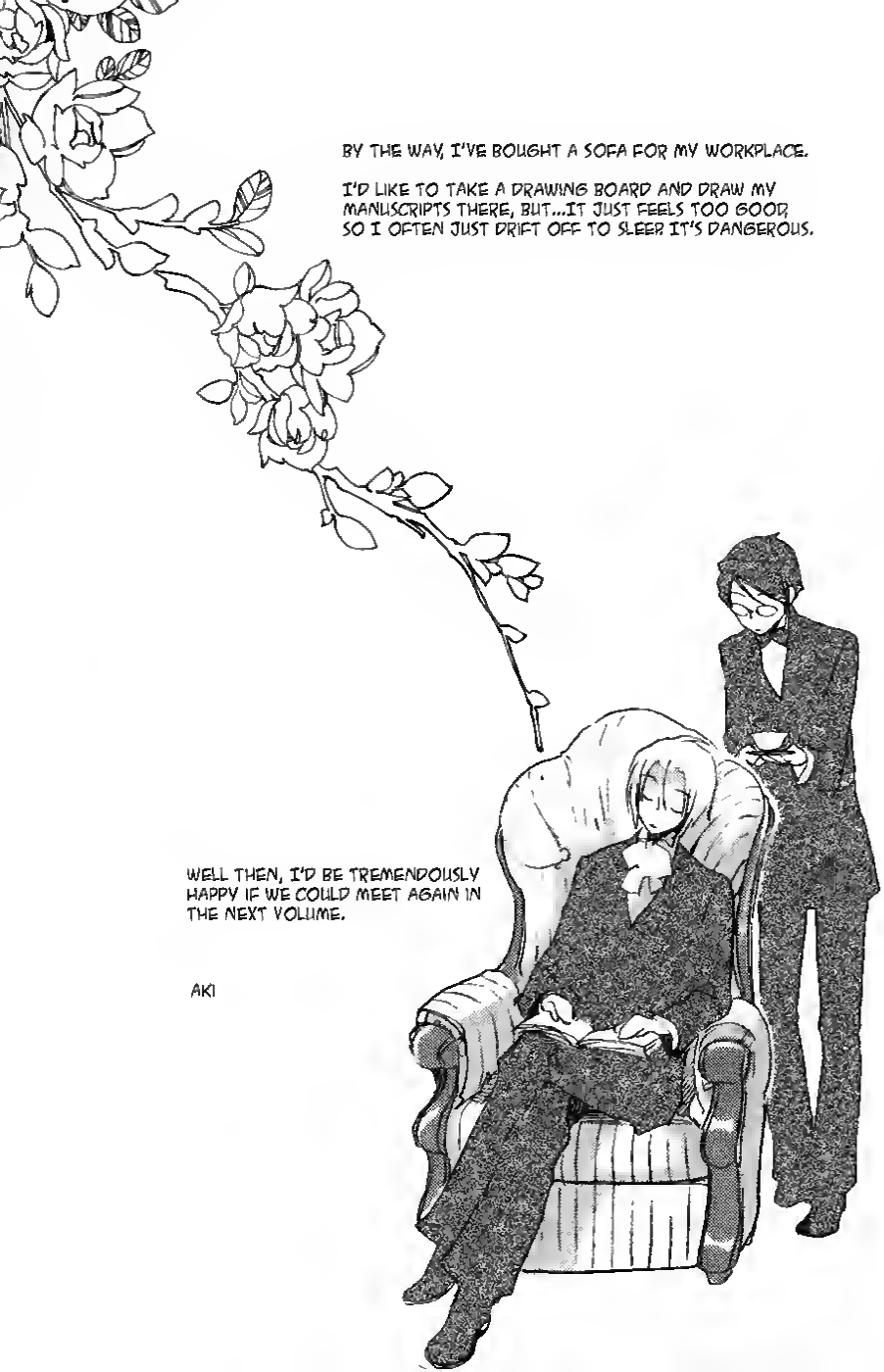
Your fidgeting is so annoying! Stay still!!

Waaah

SINCE WE'RE SERIALIZED IN A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, AND THERE AREN'T MANY PAGES PER RELEASE, THE TANKOBON COMES OUT VERY SLOWLY. I'D BE SO PLEASED IF YOU WOULD PATIENTLY STICK WITH THIS SERIES DESPITE ALL THAT!

BY THE WAY, I'VE BOUGHT A SOFA FOR MY WORKPLACE.

I'D LIKE TO TAKE A DRAWING BOARD AND DRAW MY MANUSCRIPTS THERE, BUT...IT JUST FEELS TOO GOOD, SO I OFTEN JUST DRIFT OFF TO SLEEP. IT'S DANGEROUS.



WELL THEN, I'D BE TREMENDOUSLY HAPPY IF WE COULD MEET AGAIN IN THE NEXT VOLUME.

AKI

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